

9. 'Golden Tulip Goes Greener': Environment Management at Golden Tulip Hotels

Golden Tulip Hotels is a leading hospitality company with 67 owned hotels and a great many more franchised and licensed properties all over the world. The 5 and 4-star hotels operate under the brand name 'Golden Tulip Hotels', while the 2-star category is marketed as Golden Tulip Inns.

GREEN TEAMS AND ENVIRONMENT CO-ORDINATORS

The corporate environment effort began in late 1997 with a bottom-up approach: Green Teams and Environment Champions were appointed in all Golden Tulip-owned hotels and inns in the Netherlands. The members of the Green Teams are volunteers from all levels of hotel staff.

Most co-ordinators are employees with a high level of social awareness and an overall appreciation of environment issues. While they are well placed to identify practical and low-cost good housekeeping improvements, it was found they did not have the overall business perspective needed to integrate environment management into business operations and to 'sell' the needs and benefits of environment management along the management hierarchy.

To address this issue, the Golden Tulip Business School has developed an in-house training pack for Environment Co-ordinators and Green Team members on:

- Obtaining the active participation of general managers in environment management;
- Creating and maintaining environment-oriented enthusiasm among colleagues and employees.

ENVIRONMENT MANAGEMENT

The objective was to begin action with no-cost and low-cost good housekeeping and repair activities and move on to more capital-intensive improvements at a later stage. Action therefore began in a phased effort, with a new environment action area being introduced every month. The action areas implemented to date are water, waste, energy and chemicals.

Newsletters introducing and discussing each environment action area were distributed to all employees⁹. The Green Teams were invited to submit lists of environment management actions that could be undertaken in each action area. The lists were then compiled into a series of department and operation specific-action checklists called 'Golden Tulip Goes Greener, Water/Energy/Waste/Chemicals Tips'. The departments and operations are included. The checklists were distributed to all Green Teams, which have begun to use them in the implementation of environment action.

⁹ The newsletters include general environment information on the specific action area, resource use/waste volumes statistics, 'tips' and ideas on resource conservation and waste management, quizzes and crossword puzzles and news briefs on the environment performance of selected Golden Tulip Hotels and Inns.

ENVIRONMENT TARGETS

To help maintain enthusiasm and continued environment action, the Green Teams have been given broad environment performance targets and standards for each action area. This has also helped shape systematic environment-monitoring and data-recording procedures across Golden Tulip Hotels and Tulip Inns.

CORPORATE ENVIRONMENT POLICY

The Golden Tulip Hotels' Corporate Environment Policy, established in 1999*, has validated the efforts of Green Teams and is effectively gathering support for further environment improvement.

ENVIRONMENT REPORTING

A section on the environment is included in the Golden Tulip Hotels' 1998 Social Report.

ENVIRONMENT ACTION IN 2000

Integrating and implementing the environment policy into everyday business was the main objective for 2000. Activities included:

- Environment training programmes for Green Teams and Environment Co-ordinators (discussed above);
- Two new action areas:
 - The Guest and the Environment
 - The Supplier and the Environment;
- Commencing environment action in the other divisions of Golden Tulip Hotels – Sales and Marketing, Human Resources, Purchasing and Development;
- Establishing a standardised corporate environment-performance auditing procedure;
- Carrying out environment-performance audits in all owned Golden Tulip Hotels and Tulip Inns, comparing actual performance against targets, and identifying areas for further improvement;
- Initiating environment management at Golden Tulip Hotels licensed and franchised businesses.



* The Golden Tulip Corporate Policy can be found on page 91 of this unit.

"For us in the hospitality business, environment management is imperative for continued business success. We began environment action in a practical and hands-on manner, and used this experience to establish a corporate environment policy. We are now working on improving environment performance with increased support from top management and an effective environment policy behind us.

For Golden Tulip Hotels, environment action is not a marketing tool, but a business and social responsibility. We are not planning to market our environment performance until fully-fledged environment-management programmes are up and running, and valid performance data is available."

Representative, Golden Tulip Hotels

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